

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
AND DON KNABE

APRIL 22, 2014

H.R. 3717 [HELPING FAMILIES IN MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS ACT]

More than 11 million Americans have severe schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression, yet millions are going without treatment and families struggle to find care for loved ones.

The Federal government's approach to mental health has been a patchwork of antiquated programs and ineffective policies across numerous agencies. Sadly, patients end up in the criminal justice system or on the streets because services are not available.

The current approach to mental health can best be described by its deficits: too little integration with primary or physical care; too few psychiatric hospital beds; too few psychiatrists, psychologists, and clinical social workers, especially ones who are trained and specialize in treating the seriously mentally ill.

To address the shortcomings of the nation's current system of care for the seriously mentally ill, Congressman Tim Murphy from Pennsylvania has introduced the *Helping Families In Mental Health Crisis Act* (H.R. 3717).

This bipartisan legislation marks a significant overhaul of the nation's mental-health system. It refocuses programs and resources on psychiatric care for patients and families most in need of services but who are currently the least likely to get it. This bill increases treatment options, integrates mental and physical care, and reduces barriers and the stigma associated with mental illness.

MOTION

MOLINA _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

ANTONOVICH _____

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This legislation is supported by organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS), American Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and the American Psychiatric Association (APA).

H.R. 3717 includes provisions to:

- provide improved access to psychiatric medications in the Medicaid and Medicare programs;
- enhance federal coordination of mental health services through creation of a Federal Interagency Council on Serious Mental Illness;
- increase resources for research through the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), including research on early identification of serious mental illness in youth;
- reauthorize the Federal Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA), which provides resources to states, communities and tribal governments for jail diversion, law enforcement and first responder training, and other services to prevent unnecessary criminal justice involvement for youth and adults with serious mental illness;
- improvements in community mental health services through support of integrated mental health and primary care treatment in Community Mental Health Centers;
- end longstanding discrimination against people with mental illness by permitting Federal Medicaid reimbursement of acute, inpatient psychiatric treatment.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Executive Office of the Board to send a five signature letter to Congress in support of H.R. 3717 [*Helping Families In Mental Health Crisis Act*].

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